



## **United States Mission to the OSCE**

### **Statement on Decision Authorizing Election Support Team for Afghanistan**

As delivered by Deputy Political Counselor Andrew Hyde  
to the Permanent Council, Vienna  
July 29, 2010

The United States was very pleased to join consensus on the decision to send an Election Support Team to Afghanistan. The decision demonstrates the OSCE's continued commitment to supporting international efforts to ensure credible elections, which are important for fostering democracy, respect for human rights, and stability in Afghanistan.

Today's decision comes a little more than a week after the Kabul Conference, at which the Afghan government and the international community expressed their determination to sustain a robust commitment to building a stable, secure, and prosperous Afghanistan. The Election Support Team and its recommendations will contribute to this process, helping to enhance the conduct of future elections and improve Afghanistan's legal framework and procedures. We hope ODIHR will continue to seek appropriate opportunities to follow up on its recommendations after the elections, possibly by including Afghan officials and civil society representatives in elections seminars within the OSCE region, organizing side events at Human Dimension meetings, and directly engaging with Afghan elections authorities to assist them in implementing ODIHR's recommendations.

Providing election assistance is just one way in which the OSCE can contribute to international efforts to stabilize Afghanistan. We continue to see opportunities for OSCE engagement with Afghanistan across all three dimensions, particularly in efforts to improve the security and management of Afghanistan's northern border, strengthen counternarcotics efforts, support licit trade, and promote human rights and women's empowerment. We welcome the Chairmanship's stated commitment to intensifying OSCE engagement with Afghanistan and look forward to concrete achievements in this regard.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.